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The Playground

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PLAY IS BETTER THAN MEDICINE

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PLAY AS MEDICINE*

JOSEPH LEE,

President Playground and Recreation Association of America

It seems to me that the laws of health are the most interesting laws there are. The process by which food and drink and air become man is the most interesting process in nature—a miracle in comparison with which everything else seems commonplace.

Imperious Caesar, dead and turn'd to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away.

But it seems to me infinitely more remarkable that clay, through an intermediate process of vegetation, can become imperious Caesar and shape the destinies of the world. Air, water, carbon, enter the human body and in a few hours or seconds become character. What just now was a piece of doughnut, morally innocent and unbiased, appears as love or hate or aspiration, partaking not only of human nature but of the form and accent of a particular personality, down to a trick of thought inherited from some remote ancestor.

Or if we say the body does not actually contain character, but is only the instrument of its release, the phenomenon is hardly less remarkable.

I am no physiologist, and am ignorant as to where the initiation takes place, at what stage it is that the new substance is met and welcomed, gets its credentials and its sailing papers and is made a partaker of the mystery. The ancient tradition that the blood is the life, the blood bond the basis of vital relationship, seems to have a physiological foundation. The blood has a great part assigned to it in the process by which matter becomes charged with soul. Each drop, when formed, apparently sets forth upon its mission possessed of much at least of the law and purpose of the individual. It knows, or learns as it goes along, the form of the body as a whole, judging with accuracy how much of repair is due to one tissue, how much to another—how much shall be accorded to the arms and legs, how much to the other members—and assigns to each its proper share. And the new tissues instantly understand the secret of

* An address delivered at the National Conference of Charities and Correction, Boston, Massachusetts, June 15, 1911

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the organism and their own part in it. Those constituting the body at a given time are, for their tour of duty, made custodian of the will and character of the individual, entrusted with the tradition, to carry it forward and hand it on to others in their turn. The body is like an army in active service to which thousands of new recruits are every moment reporting for duty on the field, and in which each recruit, as he is assigned his place, knows by instant intuition all that the veterans knew of the structure of the whole and his own part in it.

The body in short is not a collection of material but a process through which material passes every moment. It is like a cloud on a mountain. The cloud hangs there stationary, maintaining nearly the same shape. But if you climb up, you will find that the wind is blowing through it, sending every particle of mist singing along at the rate of perhaps thirty miles an hour. What gives the cloud its existence and its shape is not a certain body of material but a law imposed on material that passes through. Man is not a mass of matter in a certain state, but a vortex, a flame, controlling matter that comes within its reach.

HOW MAKE LIFE'S FLAME BURN BRIGHTLY

What can be done to make the flame burn more brightly? Partly, of course, the question is one of fuel; and one can learn every morning in the newspaper how by using special material, or even a special preparation of familiar kinds, one's vital energy and moral excellence can be enhanced.

But fuel is not the only consideration. A breakfast-food philosophy is incomplete. Without food or air, it is true, the man will die. But he will die in any case unless he is in condition to impose himself on food and air and imbue them with his purposes. Insistent heralds of the obvious love to reiterate such startling truths as that Napoleon could not conquer Europe without rations. But how long would it have taken his rations to conquer Europe without Napoleon? How many valiant potatoes could have done the trick?

On what, then, depends the ability to perform this miracle of subduing outer elements to the law of life? What is the way to health? Here for each of us there is an ideal body to be lived up

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into, a flower, which the seed was dreaming of, not yet fulfilled. How can you go to work to realize the dream?

The first shock to notions derived from dealing with inorganic matter is that the body grows not so much by taking in as by putting forth, that the way to accumulate strength is not by conservation but by using what you have. We are always teaching unfortunate children in our schools that if you take away two from ten you will have eight left. Whereas in all the important affairs of life when you take two from ten you are likely to get about fifteen. If you take away eight, and keep doing it, you may land up with two or three thousand, more or less.

THE FALLACY OF THE PRACTICE OF DOING NOTHING

There are people that think you can get rested by lying down. Even doctors sometimes tell you to do nothing. This might be very good advice if it were not for two things. The first is the difficulty of knowing how to go about it. What is the shape of nothing? What color is it? Where does it begin, how do you get hold of it, and exactly what is the process of its performance? The second difficulty is that the nearer you approach to doing nothing, the further you are from getting any good from it—that is to say, regarded as a complete regime. Of course there are rest and sleep and relaxation. But these do not build up. These are the gap between the waves and cease to be there when the waves cease. The prescription to do nothing is like the Irishman's account of how to make a gun—"Take a hole and pour iron round it." Until you pour your iron there isn't any hole.

THE WAY OF HEALTH IS ACTION

So the first thing we learn is that the way of health is action. You have got to do something, to use the little strength you have, expend the income that is given you, in order to accumulate power or get well.

So we prescribe exercise, gymnastics, using the muscles, moving the arms and legs. And then we find that the exercise does no good, that going through a set of motions merely makes you tired and after a time bores you almost to extinction—in fact, it becomes a question whether life is worth living at such a cost, even if it could be so lived.

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Then as you experiment you find that some motions are less boring than some others. There are combinations of movement that seem to carry a certain satisfaction with them. You can jump with a chastened joy even when you are not jumping over anything. A muscle will do more, and take more interest in doing it, when it is working as a subordinate in some larger combination—particularly when the whole body is engaged.

PLEASURE IN FORGETTING PLEASURE

But even making general, co-ordinated motions is still a somewhat dry pursuit. You cannot live by gesticulation even of the most satisfying sort. Pretty soon you find there is a mental element in healthful exercise. You are told that you must "enjoy yourself," "have a good time." And so you go yachting, take vacations, travel in Europe, frequent pleasure resorts. We have all of us seen the results of such attempts. Nothing in the long run seems to produce a deeper melancholy. The pursuit of pleasure is proverbially one in which the pursuer falls constantly behind.

Some people, however, have hit upon a device by which this sort of existence can be much improved. Young men, for instance, will go off into the woods with a pack and a canoe and an insufficient supply of food, get themselves lost, and then see whether they can get out again alive. In this way many successful experiments have been achieved. As soon as the man is no longer seeking pleasure but trying with all his faculties whether he can get out of the woods before he starves, he finds that there really begins to be a little fun in it.

There is evidently something in having to do the thing not for the pleasure there is in it but because for some reason or another it must be done. Subordination to a purpose you will find to be a standing quality in the activity that gives life and health. The purpose will not enter and build you up, will not lend its strength to you, unless you first lend your strength to it. It is not what you try to get out of a thing but what you put into it that is added to you. But it is not every kind of subordination that will make you well. Slaves are not particularly healthy, nor any people who are forced to drudge under exacting task masters.

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THE HEALING POWER OF WORK

Usually the best form of subordination is in conforming to the conditions of some kind of service. Those who have had most experience, doctors as well as charity workers, agree that the thing that conduces most to health is work—work that is recognized and respected, and through which a person takes his part in the world and does his share.

Often—usually perhaps—such work is paid. But as charity workers know, being paid for it is not a necessary feature of the job that cures. A woman taking care of her family is made well by it. A child who does his lessons well in school is getting the same kind of benefit. Many child-helpers have told me that the very best thing for a boy or girl is having some definite duty to do at home which is recognized and respected. In old days the making good of the young citizen took a military form. The Roman took the *toga virilis*, the young Athenian became a “man” when he reached proficiency in the arts of war.

What is it that gives to work this healing property? It is the consciousness of making good. What happens to you when you get hold of a piece of useful work is the coming into your life of the sense of holding up your end, of being one of the team, a member in full standing, able to say: “We, the citizens of Boston, who carry on and constitute the city, think so and so.”

THE INSTINCT TO BELONG

In short, the healing power of work is in its gratification of the great play instinct to belong—the instinct that makes the city and the state and is seen in boys’ gangs and in the team. This team instinct is the source of the necessity of making good and of the life that comes from doing so. The law of the team implies fulfillment of his part by every member, just as the law of the body makes its requirement of the lungs and the muscles and the rest. Are you the sort of stone that we can use or must you be rejected of the builders? We live, according as we feel the requirement of society fulfilled in us, as the boy’s life and satisfaction is in holding down third base. The initiations of college societies stand for a constant characteristic of every social whole. Birds will kill their lame comrade because their team sense will not allow them to abandon him, and his disability is a disability to the flock.

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CONSCIOUSNESS OF BEING A LAME DUCK

As there is nothing that will kill faster than the consciousness of being a lame duck, a useless drag on the working members of society, so there is nothing that gives life like the sense of competency.

There is one important and very practical thing we can all do to heal the sick, through the action of this team instinct to make good, which has so far been very little recognized. Already we are doing much to get people into useful work. Industrial education, employment bureaus, associated charities, doctors, all are working to this end. The other thing we can all co-operate to do is to enlarge our conception of what constitutes useful work so as to include the service that the sick can render. Dr. James J. Putnam has written well and with authority upon this subject. The thing above all others that makes invalids, and prevents those who have once fallen behind in the race from getting well, is the fact that once put out of the running, once below the standard which enables a person to take his part in the industrial world, no other standard is provided. The invalid has no recognized duty to perform. There is nothing definite required of him, and no recognition is given to what he does.

A TRUE MEMBER OF SOCIETY

Society like the individual has an invisible body toward which it tends. As any person so places himself as to fill out that form, he is received into it. He becomes a true member. The life of the whole passes through him and sustains him as the law of the cathedral thrills down through each detail, bursts out in the gargoyle here, restrains the pinnacle there, vibrates upward in the spire, and holds every stone in place. The invisible social body varies in its form. It exists in the minds of the people, and changes with their thought. It is the places that the public will, the people's conception, calls for, that can be filled, and in filling which a man partakes of the social life. There is a spiritual as well as a material demand and supply. Athens produced philosophers and artists because every citizen's conception of the body politic, because the real Athens of which the Parthenon and the Long Walls are but the material reflection, included philosophy and art. So Sparta produced soldiers, Rome administrators, Yale football players. These fill out

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the unseen body, the invisible corporation that the members have projected in their hearts.

THE INVALID'S PART

We must so extend our notions of what constitutes society that even these last, the invalids, are members of the team with a part assigned to them. We must learn to see so clearly that society's supreme duty is the soul's health of each that the neglect to attribute an honorable function, implying a moral demand, to any single member shall be abhorrent to us. We must in general feel that the invalid must and shall have a part, and in particular there is a task ahead of us in working out definitely for different classes of invalids and different individuals precisely what practical duties and responsibilities they can fulfill.

We must somehow say to the man that is down: "You are not left out; you as well as the rest have to hold up your end. Perhaps you are the one with the hardest job assigned. You are holding the line at its weakest point. You cannot contribute to material prosperity, but you can uphold the dignity of human nature where it is most imperiled."

And the part assigned to the invalid is indeed an important part. The regiment could never make a charge—there could never be a regiment at all—if those stricken down as it advances were not a part of it. It is because, whole or wounded, sick or well, alive or dead, they are a part of it, partakers of its acts, still advancing with it in their hearts, triumphing in its victory, that there can be such a thing as a regiment, an army, or a state. It is Dr. Putnam who has quoted in this connection Clough's verses:

If hopes were dupes, fears may be liars;
It may be, in yon smoke concealed,
Your comrades chase e'en now the fliers;
And, but for you, possess the field.

For while the tired waves, vainly breaking,
Seem here no painful inch to gain,
Far back, through creeks and inlets making,
Comes silent, flooding in, the main.

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What real opportunities exist to be assigned in a given society depends on the opinion of its members as to the functions of that society. A man can be fully a member of a social body only if the part which he can play is recognized.

Heroic souls, it is true, can project their own society, can constitute through their own genius an ideal world and be sustained by it. But for the average sick soul, such a feat is beyond its strength.

We shall have inspired invalids, and genius in homely forms, in proportion as the commonwealth we each carry in our hearts shall call for them. The creation of human personality in all its manifestations is an act of faith to which we all contribute or from which we may detract.

POLITICIANS NEVER DIE

The vital potency of the belonging instinct is seen in many ways. It is said, for instance, that politicians never die, so potent to sustain is their function as official representatives of the community's team sense. Gladstone came very near to verifying that theory. When Balfour became a member of the House of Commons a long row of medicine bottles vanished from his shelf and have not reappeared. Methuselah I think was some sort of patriarch or political functionary.

In America the instinct is especially exuberant. Everyone you meet is either a Mason, an Odd Fellow, a Knight of some kind, a son or daughter of some great event, a pillar of a sewing circle or women's club, or a member of the Grange, to which everyone belongs, including father. In the old days in Boston they used to have inoculation parties when young people would go down to an island in the harbor and be inoculated with the smallpox. So now we have, I believe, tuberculosis clubs; and I suppose that any health resort is more or less of a conspiracy among a lot of invalids to set up a standard of achievement attainable to themselves and lower than the impossible, and therefore discouraging one which prevails in the outside world of the robustious. The old Yankee word "jiner"—one who joins—is now descriptive of the American people as a whole.

Work itself may be made greatly more life-giving even than it is when, besides being the method whereby a man makes good as a member of society as a whole, it also affords him the sense of team

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play in the small immediate group with which he works. The great undeveloped resource in this and every other country is the team sense of the workers. Socialism is utterly on the wrong track in trying to eliminate from industry the element of competition, with its satisfaction of one of the great play instincts of mankind; it is on the right track in preaching co-operation. What we want, however, is not preaching but development of the capacity for co-operation by actual exercise. We want production by co-operative societies, participation of the workmen in the conduct of our corporations, co-operation of farmers in the buying of machinery and supplies and the sale of product, concrete participation in government by the extended application of the town meeting—in short, the utilization of the great human belonging faculty in our work as well as in our play. Team play in industry is the great neglected game and means of health.

TEAM PLAY THE GREAT GAME

As the muscle derives its health from serving in a combination with the whole body, as the body owes its health to serving the purposes of the mind, so the life and health of the whole organism depend on acting as a member of a larger whole. The team law compels each member to his place as the bodily law assigns its duty to each organ. And this law of the social whole thrills down into all the members of the individual until each feels the swing of the larger orbit and responds. No drop of blood can do its best work, can go singing on its way content and happy, unless the whole body serves the mind and the whole man is a servant to the social whole. We are, for better or worse, citizens, parts of a larger organism. Every tissue in us knows it. Our physical life depends upon our loyalty. It is true such service may bring death in battle or in the hospital, but it is also true that the absence of such service shuts out all hope of life.

THE ADVANTAGES OF COMPETITION

But there are other kinds of play besides belonging. Olmsted, reporting his experience with the sanitary commission during the Civil War, said that systematic athletic recreation and the military bands had a great tendency to keep the soldiers well, while sending money home kept up their morale.

At the present time American athletic sports are driving out

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head-hunting in the Philippines as being a more satisfying expression of the fighting impulse. Competition is one of the root instincts of mankind and the commonest element in all our games. To leave it out of the game of real life would be to make existence flat indeed. A race in which all receive the same prize—because though he did not win, little Johnnie ran his best—will not permanently appeal to any boy or man. To cut the connection between successful exertion and the result obtained is to lame the arithmetic of life and rob it of its normal satisfaction. No man will be either competent or satisfied when the element of competition is removed.

WALTER SCOTT FOR A COLD

Some people I know always take Walter Scott for a cold. Some consider Trollope a more effective prescription; I believe, however, in reserving his Barchester and Parliamentary series for longer illnesses.

The simplest form of sport I have heard of, invented by a friend of mine when he had nervous prostration, was breathing. He told me it was the only thing that kept him alive. His invention did not consist of finding out that when your breath stops you die, but in learning that he could amuse himself by taking long breaths and letting them out very slowly with a hissing sound. This process, besides providing him an occupation, must have brought the additional satisfaction of being offensive to anyone in hearing. This is what the psychological students of play call "joy in being a cause"—and joy in being a nuisance is like unto it, and a very close second at that.

I remember one time when I was sick a niece of mine gave me a Japanese straw badger, and she fixed him with one of his arms up in the air so as to present a cheerful and enterprising aspect. He was, I think, the first incarnation of Denry the Audacious, Mr. Bennet's late creation. I think in my case it was that badger that pulled me through, though the cure was shared by a nurse who kept me doing things so that I was always looking forward to the next stunt, and a Japanese bird of a cheerful and adequate personality hung in a Christmas wreath.

SEEING PLEASANT THINGS

Just seeing pleasant things is a potent means of health. That is why girls make such good friendly visitors. Remember also Kip-

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ling's lighthouse man who went crazy because the steamers made streaks in his water. When he got on board a ship where the lines ran all kinds of ways, he began to feel better at once. When you have been in a city, where everything goes at right angles, you can feel the vital currents leap up again when you go out and see the rounded tree tops and sloping hills. The seashore is good if you don't take too much. But most people, I think, would die of it if they could not get where there was something besides gray colors and horizontal lines. Traveling would really be as good for us as it is supposed to be if you did not have to die first,—that is, cut off all your other means of life in order to indulge in it.

I remember associated charity cases in which the cure was wrought by taking the patient out into the country, or even on a walk along Washington street to see the shops. Perhaps in the Washington street case there was also the element of the football tactics required in order to win through that thoroughfare.

THE PLAY OF THE HAND

Next to the play of the eyes there is the play of the hand. Man is a creature of the hand. He was built back from it as a river is said to grow backwards from its mouth. It was from the beginning of his career as man his point of issue, the business end of him, what the jaws are to the wolf, the claws to the cat. As he first grew up from it, he can be restored through reverting to its use. Man is primarily a manipulator. Perhaps man and manual mean for practical purposes the same. His mind and temperament are built on manipulation and are tuned to it. In a few years from now you will find in every hospital manual occupation provided, fitted to the strength and talents of the different patients.

THE RHYTHMIC INSTINCT

I believe the greatest neglected source of health is in the rhythmic instinct. Its first and simplest expression, and its completest for most people, is in the form of dancing. The mistake we usually make is to suppose that dancing is for children only. The right age to learn to dance is the age you happen to be; but the best age for the use of the accomplishment is from about fifty on. The instinct is as strong in the later as in the earlier part of life, and the need of using it is greater in proportion as we tend to become

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stiff in the joints both of our body and mind. I think the National Conference of Charities should have its folk dances as well as its baseball. You know the last part of the story of the grasshopper and the ant—which has unfortunately been omitted from all editions heretofore—is that the grasshopper took the ant's advice, danced through the winter, and came out in better shape than the ant, who had been sitting all the time over a stove.

Then there is music, the dancing of the mind, which has restored many, from the age of Saul down to the present.

PLAY OF THE MIND

The most important play is play of the mind. All play is play of the soul—the active projection of the man himself as a force in the universe of action. But man is a thinking animal. It is that head of his that has won out against claw and horn and tooth. And it is the exercise of the mind that sounds the glad sources of his strength and shows him as the gladiator he is.

The mental element is in all play, but most in art and science, and these are the best play of man and the most health-giving. We keep our children now too many hours in school and too many hours doing nothing while there. But school, rightly conducted, is as important to health as outdoor play. And in later years the mental kind of play becomes increasingly valuable. The lawyer averages healthier than the prize-fighter, and a man can live longer on music than he can on golf.

THE WAY TO WIN LIFE IS BY LIVING IT

Back of this whole treatment, the secret of every cure through play, is that the way to win life is by living it; the way for anyone to extend his personality is by acting out the personality he has. Here, next the human body, actually absorbed into it or ready to be absorbed, are cells and other molecules sitting round waiting to see what kind of sport you have to offer them. Is your invitation worth accepting, is the kind of game they see going on there one that is worth their while to join? Can you get up such an excitement, such a rush and concourse of those who have already joined, that the on-looker is swept along in the contagion, compelled irresistibly to take a part? The game of health is like getting up a dance or a picnic. You must go in with a vim and a whoop if you

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want others to join with you. It is the big fire that spreads. Or it is like the method adopted by Mark Twain's Tom Sawyer when he had to whitewash the fence. You remember that he did his whitewashing with such gusto and artistic appreciation of his job, that the other boys, instead of pitying him, actually parted with their treasures—even to a dead rat with a string to swing it by that one of them was so happy as to possess—to buy a chance to do his work for him. Now Tom Sawyer is the sort of microbe you must have in your system in order to attract the rest. And it is you yourself—the actual you that deliberates and acts—who by the zest and interest of the work you assign to them can give to those already enlisted this triumphant and enticing character.

Of course I have not undertaken to cover the entire ground of play and show the use of every kind as medicine. I have merely indicated some of the chief veins that may be worked.

It is not every kind of dance that is given to a human being to perform. My own list of the play instincts—which are the constituting purposes of man—is creation, rhythm, hunting, fighting, nurture, curiosity, team play. Of hunting, fighting, and nurture, not spoken of above, it may be briefly said that we all know the therapeutic value of the chasing games and of going fishing, of the games of contest and of a good scrap; while having some living thing to take care of, if it is only a dog or a geranium, is the best, and fortunately the best understood, prescription for keeping almost any woman alive and well.

This list is doubtless incomplete. I give it as a contribution to the notion we ought to be forming of the general outline of that spiritual body which it is given to man to attain. Upon the recognition that there is such a spiritual body and the successful exploration of its form the future of all social, educational, and medical work mainly depends.

There are certain words written in our hearts that are the master words, that contain the possibilities of life for us. These are the ultimates, the things in which our actual life consists, to which all other phenomena of living are subordinate, all other vital processes tributary. Play is the fulfillment of these master instincts.

And it is in play, thus understood, that all our other actions find their cause and justification. We use the expression "full play" for a thing that is acting as nature meant it to. The emotions play,

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the fountain plays, meaning the thing fulfills its function in the world. And so of men. Play is the word that best covers the things which he as man was wound up to do, in the doing of which he finds his soul, becomes himself. It is by being citizen, nurturer, poet, creator, scientist, by actively filling out the ideal body waiting for him, that a man can win or save his health.

THE PAGEANT OF THETFORD*

WILLIAM CHAUNCY LANGDON

The drama of an agricultural town in Vermont, of its whole life, not only reproducing its history throughout the length of its 150 years, but prophesying its future development so specifically and convincingly as to be itself an inspiring potent force in that development,—this is what the Pageant of Thetford aspired to be and what in truth it became. To the people of Thetford it seems quite the natural thing to do, to continue their Pageant Committee as a permanent body to direct the general town development,—introducing scientific methods of agriculture under the advisory guidance of the United States Department of Agriculture and of the Vermont Agricultural College, arranging for the wholesale co-operative purchase of their grain and fertilizer and later for the co-operative marketing of their produce, overseeing the spread of the Boy Scouts and the Camp Fire Girls' through the town, continuing the pageant orchestra and chorus, and arranging from time to time for a union town service in which the people of all the six villages shall gather together for united worship. To their minds these are appropriate duties for a Pageant Committee. What is a pageant for but to unite a town and to keep it united and moving along the road of its best welfare? The Pageant of Thetford is over; its three performances took place on August 12, 14 and 15, 1911; it served its purpose as a lamp to light the way at the cross-roads. But the real Pageant of Thetford is not over; it is there in the town, a

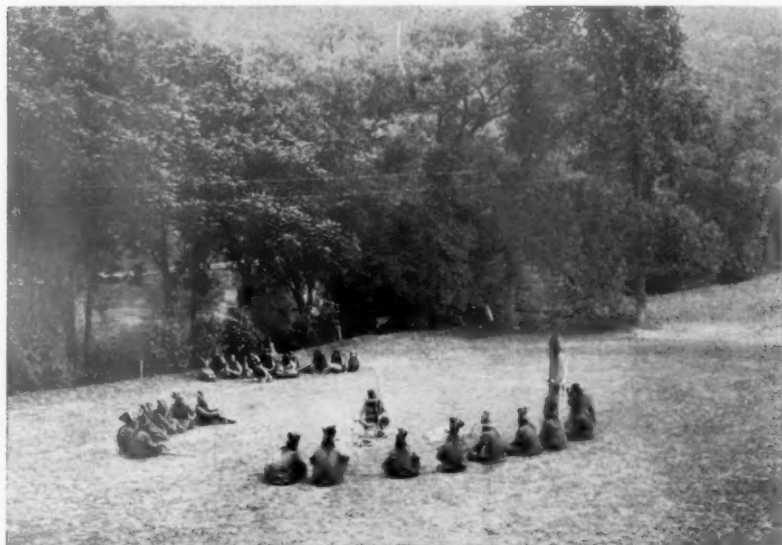
* This article is part of a chapter on the Pageant of Thetford in Mr. Langdon's forthcoming book, "The Pageant in America," published by Frederick W. Wilson, 37 East 28th Street, New York City. Price \$1.00. A review of this book will appear in an early number. On account of limited space it is necessary to omit here all that pertains to the first of the pageant.

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spirit,—invisible but radiant, substantial and abiding, sweeping forward on its way the whole life of the town.

PAGEANT POSSIBLE IN A SMALL VILLAGE

Thetford is a Vermont town situated on the Connecticut River about half way up the eastern boundary of the state. It has a population of 1,182 in an area of about 42 square miles. This is the lowest population the town has had since the first census was taken in 1791. Its history shows about the same course as most of our New England agricultural communities, reaching a height of pros-



"OLD QUAIL JOHN," THE FIRST SETTLER, ROASTING HIS QUAIL AND
NEGOTIATING WITH THE INDIANS

perity in the period before the Civil War, and thereafter diminishing to a condition of rather serious depletion at the present time. The common fortune of the farming towns resulted in Thetford in a situation especially acute by reason of the fact that there the population was divided among six villages located at distances of from two to nine miles apart. Furthermore in the case of three of these villages, villages of other towns were nearer to them and had closer relations with them than some of the villages of their own

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town. In the absence of any strong interest common to the whole town, these diverse local interests of the villages had a disruptive effect so far as the community life of the town was concerned, and it would be quite a correct statement to say that Thetford was six villages, but hardly a town.

ATTEMPT TO SHOW SOLUTION OF RURAL PROBLEM

The situation from the pageant point of view was difficult, especially as the idea was not merely to make the pageant the celebration of the 150th anniversary of the town but the dramatized inception for a movement for the development of all the resources of the town,—agricultural, educational, social; in a word the dramatized inception of an attempt to solve the rural problem. There were those, in various parts of the state, who certainly would be considered competent to judge, who said that such a thing was impossible. The comment usually took one of two forms, either "I know Thetford well, and it can't be done," or, with a smile, "Well, if you can do it in Thetford, you can do it anywhere." To give names would be convincing but, in view of the successful outcome,



RICHARD WALLACE SAYING GOOD-BYE TO HIS WIFE BEFORE LEAVING
WITH THE SOLDIERS FOR BENNINGTON, AT THE TIME
OF BURGOYNE'S INVASION

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not fair. For that matter quite a number of people in Thetford regarded the idea as impracticable. One of the most intelligent, public-spirited men in the town opposed it strongly and steadily for months; he appreciated the great harm it would do the community if they entered upon such an undertaking and failed. He was wise, and from the intelligent point of view right in his attitude. Intelligence, however, like fire, is a bad master. When a man finds himself in the last corner, when a town finds itself in the grip of the rural problem, there is only one thing to do until the mastery is regained, disregard intelligence, shut eyes to facts and rely on determination. Frederic Ridgely Torrence has expressed this saving principle of conduct with victorious charm:

When my desire has set itself
Upon a thing and strives to win it,
And Wisdom's methods will not gain,
I use a little Folly in it.

The people of Thetford followed Torrence's example and decided to do it anyway, whether it could be done or not. And they did it: the pageant was a success and the greater pageant is progressing splendidly. If they continue as they have gone thus far, they bid fair not only to breathe new life into their town but to make a valuable contribution to the solution of the rural problem.

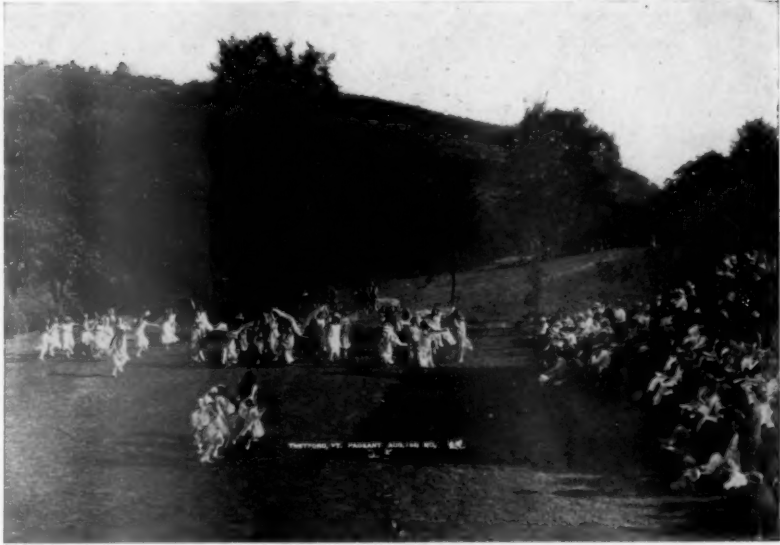
THETFORD PAGEANT AN AGRICULTURAL DRAMA

Thetford has always been an agricultural town. Therefore its pageant is an agricultural drama. When history comes down to the present it ceases to be called history and becomes public questions. The solution of all public questions, the answers, lie in the future. If the drama of a town follows the history down to the present, in order to be complete it must go on into the future and present the answers to the public questions of the present. Otherwise it will not be a whole drama; it will be lamentably unfinished; it would be much better to have confined the drama to the noble limitations of a purely historical pageant. But here in the present and the future lie the greatest civic value and the most thrilling dramatic opportunity of the pageant. The pageant, like the novel, can be used for the study and vivid statement of questions of the day, and for working out their solution, for it is a type of drama

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that not merely pictures its subject-matter, the life of a town, but entering intimately into that life, may become a vital part of it and take on a creative relation to the future welfare and development of the community. The Master of the Pageant is like the architect of a public building, preliminary: he plans the building as an artist and so helps in the construction, but his function is passed by the time the building is turned over to the people to use as the shelter for the work of the coming years. It was in this way that the people of Thetford used their pageant for the study of their condition as a town and for their attack upon the problem that oppresses most of our agricultural communities. It is necessary clearly to understand this, or the significance of the Pageant of Thetford will be missed. It is impossible to draw the line between the drama and the town development and it always has been from the beginning. This was true,—if I may speak personally for a moment,—not only in my own work and in that of my assistant in the general management, Miss Edith Brownell, but also in the work of my other associates. It is impracticable to draw a line between their technical work for the drama and the social effect of their work in the life of the town. Mr. James T. Sleeper, since become Professor of Music at Beloit, wrote and arranged music for both orchestra and chorus which was beautiful, appropriate to its purpose in the pageant, and suited to the ability of the players and singers; but he did more than that in the revelation he made to the people of the town and to everyone else as well of the music that a chorus and orchestra, largely local could produce. The same thing is true in the work of Miss Virginia Tanner, who originated and trained the dances in the pageant, and herself danced in the three interludes, and who particularly in the Dance of the Nature Spirits made for the town a work of art of supreme beauty of color and of motion. Even more clear was it in the splendid publicity, Miss Brownell's own remarkable achievement, that brought overflowing audiences to the performances in spite of the remoteness of the town from large centers and in spite of a rather discouraging train schedule. Except for these large and appreciative audiences the effectiveness of all the other work, artistic and industrial and social, would have been seriously impaired. Indeed her value as an assistant in the general management, in which she did much for the social unity of the work, came

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THE DANCE OF THE NATURE SPIRITS

from the fact that she appreciated that the pageant and the development of the town were one. And they were one. It was all one. The drama was simply in a sense the epitome, presented the concentrated substance, of the whole movement.

THE HISTORY OF THE TOWN VIVIDLY SET FORTH

It will be seen by an examination of the Book of the Words of the Pageant* that the structure of the pageant comprised five symbolic scenes and twelve realistic episodes. The five symbolic scenes were generalizations of the conditions in the town at different periods expressed in terms of dramatic symbolism. They were however quite as essential and advanced the plot quite as much as the realistic episodes. Indeed, taken by themselves, apart from the episodes, they will be found to constitute a history in symbolism of the progress of the town. The twelve realistic episodes reproduced typical incidents from the actual occurrences of the past, or such as are characteristic of the present or will be of the future. They

*The Book of the Words of the Pageant of Thetford was published by the Pageant Committee. It can be obtained by addressing Miss Margaret Fletcher, Secretary of the Pageant Committee, Thetford, Vermont. The price is 25c.

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are not separate little pictures, unrelated to each other except as they come in the order of time, but twelve scenes comprising the four acts of one continuous play, bound together in the absence of any continuing individual characters by the recurrent generalizations of the symbolic scenes. These four groups are concerned respectively with:

- 1 The Making of the Town
- 2 The Development of the Town
- 3 The Depletion of the Town
- 4 The Future of the Town.

* * * *

THE AGE OF HOMESPUN

The second Interlude, The Age of Homespun, was typical of the rural sociability and economic independence of the time that was so aptly named by Horace Bushnell. In the middle of the grounds people young and old in the costumes of the middle of the 19th century danced the old contra dances, while around the edge family groups engaged in the old home industries, quilting, spinning and weaving, making maple sugar, threshing and winnowing. In the new industrial plans something of the same sort of home industries will be revived in the Thetford Kitchen, which is being organized by some of the women of Thetford co-operatively to turn to good account at home some of their spare time and some of the small farm products; making jams, jellies, cheese, and other articles for the market.

WAR TIMES

Into the simple joyousness of the country-folk, breaking right into their dancing comes the Spirit of War. She is clad in red of a peculiarly virulent shade, and carries a bared sword. The music changes instantly from the rural fiddle tunes of the dancing to the brutal march in Tschaiowsky's Nut-cracker Suite. The Spirit of War is insolent, fierce, mocking and cruel. She rages around among the people driving them hither and thither before her and away until she finally has the ground entirely to herself; then after one last hysterical moment of fury, she whirls away. At once the long roll on the drum begins and the survivors of the

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local post of the Grand Army march in with their battle flag from one end of the grand stand and diagonally across to the foot of the hill where they take their stand and watch the episode of the Civil War which is thus performed as a tribute to them. At one performance, with the inspiration of the moment, the Spirit of War in her retreat stopped and turned at the entrance of the Grand Army and stood erect and motionless, a red figure, far back half way up the hill her sword-blade gleaming in the sunlight held at arms length straight above her head, as the veterans filed across the stage in front of her to their place under the little elm.

AWAY FROM THE FARM

The third group of episodes traced The Depletion of the Town, first the Civil War killing many of the town's best young men and bereaving many of its best women, yet bringing together all the townspeople in the one dominant interest of the whole community; then The Introduction of Machinery, sending away from the town many whole families of the small farmers; and last The Rural Problem, the low point of the pageant, cutting down into the heart of the family life and destroying its sweetness.

The Civil War reproduced what the Civil War meant to Thetford, not what it was on the firing-line. A squad of new recruits leave for the front. A despatch is received and read by the minister reporting a rumor that a battle is raging in southern Pennsylvania at a village called Gettysburg; the people hear it in utter appalling silence, wondering if their own husbands or sons may not that moment be lying dead or wounded on the rumored battle field. There are new enlistments. A train comes in bringing home some of the wounded from a recent battle, and the town doctor is hurriedly summoned to care for them. Another despatch is received to the effect that the tide of the war has been turned by victory at Gettysburg, and the people go home to care for their wounded and to help the last recruits to get ready to go away to the south, for Vermont will do her part. With the close of the episode the chorus sang Arthur Farwell's new Hymn to Liberty as the Grand Army followed the people of '63 from the grounds.

THE INTRODUCTION OF MACHINERY

The Introduction of Machinery showed the main cause of depletion, the drain of the smaller farmers from the country dis-

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tricts to the mill towns during the later 70's, the 80's and on into the 90's. A city friend is trying though in vain to persuade a small farmer of Thetford to give up the farm and go with him to work in the mills that are springing up plentifully down the river in Massachusetts and Connecticut. The small farmer, however, is quite content; he makes a living partly by working his own little place, partly by wages working for his neighbor who has a large farm. The big farmer comes along proudly driving his new mower, with which he announces that he can do more work with



THE CIVIL WAR EPISODE
Taking the Wounded Home

less hands than ever before. It soon transpires that he will no longer need the small man's services. Thus deprived of half his income, he listens to the voice of necessity and decides to do the only thing he can do—sell his land to his richer neighbor and go with his city friend to make a new beginning of life in the mills down the river. It is hard, especially for the young wife and mother; there is no ill will on either side; it is simply an instance of the inevitable suffering that comes in the path of progress, "a case of the introduction of machinery in both places, in the country and in the town" affecting the current of population.

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THE VISION OF THE FUTURE FOR THE NEW GENERATION OF FARMERS

The Rural Problem stated what seems to be the most serious element in the agricultural situation at the present time, the bottom of the whole trouble. The understanding of the question on which this episode is based is that the rural problem has little or nothing to do with so-called "abandoned farms." There are none, or few if any; certainly few in Thetford at least. Owing to pioneer conditions the people of the country districts of New England during



THE TOWN FAIR
The Boy Scouts and the Camp Fire Girls

the century before the Civil War came to live in circumstances of economic independence, every household relying on itself for all its needs, whether of food, of clothing, or of shelter. Since the Civil War the whole business life of the country has changed. No section of the country does or can live in economic independence; the whole nation lives in and by economic interdependence. But some of our agricultural communities are trying to live on in the way their fathers lived. They are strong men. They manage to

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make a living; but they can make no headway. Science and specialization are needed to enable them to get the best out of the soil; business system is needed to fit their local industry into its place in the marketing and exchange currents of the country. They are intelligent men; they know facts when they see them in front of them. They know they cannot make headway; they know they are trying to swim against a current too powerful for them; and they get discouraged; they belittle their own value, and underestimate the dignity of their town. But the young are growing up; they scent the breath of life in the general atmosphere of the nation that comes to them through the magazines and the newspapers. They are ambitious and reckless; they want to do things. But the blight is on the home and on the home town. From disbelieving in themselves and in their town, the parents have come to the fatal point of disbelieving in their own children; and this cuts straight down through the heart of the family. It deprives the parents of their children; it deprives the children of their parents, when each needs the other most.

THE CRY OF THE COUNTRY BOY FOR A CHANCE TO ACHIEVE

So in the episode, with the neutral background of the haying, the father and the son dispute about the proper way to manage the farm until they get to mutual recriminations, disrespectful on the son's part and unappreciative on the father's part. The mother comes, bringing a pail of water to the two men. Seeing the trouble she asks, "What are you two threshing out now?" Her disbelief in her boy shows itself in a tender distrust lest harm come to him if he should leave the home farm. The girl that he is keeping company with comes along. She is fond of him but does not really understand him. Petulantly flinging away from his father and mother, he comes back to her and pours out his troubles to her, rather losing control of himself as he impetuously but quite accurately sums up the situation:

"They love me but they do not believe in me. I have a *right* for them to believe in me! They do not believe in me because I am their son, because I am a Thetford boy. If I came from anywhere else,—if I were anyone else's son,—I might have a chance,—but— It is all wrong! It takes the heart out of me. They ought

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to back me up—me, *me!* Then I could go and win! Or stay and win, if it were a matter of staying! (Lettie looks at him shocked at his outburst). I know they love me; you need not look at me like that. I know it better than you do. I want some one to believe in me, if it's only one! Let them hate me, but believe in me!"

But when he appeals to her a moment later, her reply is merely to take his hands, look up affectionately into his face, and ask, "Why do you go?" He looks quietly down into her eyes a moment and simply says, "Because I must." He is alone. As far as the family is concerned, the father correctly states the situation in the last line of the episode as he drives off the hay-wagon, "Well, Mother, I reckon he's gone."

FAITH IS THE VICTORY

As the broken family depart, Thetford, a personification of the town, comes down through the elm-gate. She is clad in her colors, green and blue, but they are so faded as to be almost brown. She stretches out her arms in compassion after them. In her distress for them she appeals in all directions for help, though with little hope, and then sinks in hopeless dejection prostrate on the ground. Then The Spirit of Pageantry appears, resplendent, mystic, radiant with hope and joy, instinct with dignity. She is the spirit that puts joy into all work. For a moment she stands between the two elm trees. As soon as she sees Thetford lying on the ground, she goes to her and raises her up, showing her sympathy with her, as woman with woman. Then she turns and points her to the south where is seen a vision of America on a white horse, the shield of the United States on her arm and the American flag in her hand. As Thetford gazes in wonder at her, America raises the flag as a sign of recognition to Thetford. Thetford turns back to the Spirit of Pageantry; she has vanished. She turns to gaze again at the vision of America; she also is gone. She stands rapt in amazement; then obeying an intimation of the Spirit of Pageantry she reaches down to the ground and draws forth from the soil a sword, the Sword of Power. She holds it forth straight over her head, self-reliant, strong, her face radiant with confidence

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in the future, her arms upraised to the heavens, as orchestra and voices render a chorus which begins:

Toward the future cast thine eyes;
Sunshine floods the heavenly dome!
O'er each roof the Eagle flies:
In the Nation lives the Home!

KNOWLEDGE MAKES FAITH REASONABLE

The generalization which is the basis of this third interlude was justified by the strong interest that was taken early in the spring in what the town was undertaking to do by a number of the scientists of the United States Department of Agriculture, notably by Prof. Milton Whitney, Chief of the Bureau of Soils, Mr. H. J. Wilder of the same bureau, and Mr. Lawrence G. Dodge of the Bureau of Farm Management. By direction of Dr. Whitney, Mr. Wilder spent two weeks in the town, advising the farmers individually as to the soil conditions and crop adaptability of the farms on the spot. Justified by the attention given and the practical use of this assistance the United States Department of Agriculture and also the Vermont Agricultural College have continued their help in the form of advisory guidance. So that already the town has had the benefit of the best scientific advice in the country on questions of soils, farm management, pasturage, and forestry. Further under the supervision of the Vermont Commissioner of Agriculture a cow-test association has been formed to enable the dairy farmers to know which of their cows are profitable and thus to increase the real value of their herds. Mention has already been made of the contemplated assistance of the Vermont Agricultural College in arranging laboratory facilities for the agricultural courses of the academy on the neighboring farms, to the advantage both of the students and of the farmers.

THE FUTURE

Directly following the third interlude came the episodes foreshadowing the Future of the Town—The New Agriculture, The New Education, and The New Life, showing the material basis for the future prosperity, the development of the town's future men and women, and the free sociability of a united community. The date is supposed to be 1915. It was advantageous to the idea and

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technically quite practicable to blend these three episodes into one and also to merge it with the Finale. Here in these episodes of the future lay the purpose of the pageant, and indeed the *raison d'être* of all pageantry. How can the town in its drama reach ahead and seize encouragement and suggestion for the solution of its special difficult problem? How can it get a vision of its victory?

THE NEW AGRICULTURE

The New Agriculture was a town fair. It was a real fair. On account of the early date exhibits of crops were omitted, but live stock and machinery were exhibited. The dialogue all through was spoken by two characters, one the Master of the Grange, and the other a western farmer who has come back to Vermont for Old Home Week; the part of the Master of the Grange was taken by the real Master of the Grange, and that of the western farmer by a farmer who had gone away from the town and had later returned, as at the close of the episodes he says he is going to do. The town fair was the result of a conversation in which it was gradually brought out how much high grade stock there really was in the town



THE ENTRANCE OF AMERICA, VERMONT, AND THE ESCORT OF STATES

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although the people of the town as a whole were not at all aware of it.

So as the Jersey and Ayrshire and Holstein cattle and the Morgan horses are brought in and put on exhibition the Master of the Grange points out their merits and the two comment on western *versus* Vermont farming. Then, with the introduction from the Master of the Grange, "There's our best crop—our boys and girls," in come the Camp Fire Girls and Boy Scouts of the town, coming to the fair, in which of course they are as keenly interested as their elders and in which they have their part. The westerner qualifying comments that they have Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls everywhere, to which however the Master of the Grange retorts,

"Yes, but with us it is town policy. It is a development of our resources equalled by nothing else. Not only it makes them men and women from head to foot, but it keeps them young."

So under the simple outdoor conditions that develop resourcefulness, the girls build a fire and cook food and dance some of the simple wholesome folk dances that our new Americans have brought us from other lands, the boys rescue and resuscitate a boy that was found drowning in the river, while the girls warm a blanket for him and feed him; and then the boys run an exciting hurdle-race while the girls look on and cheer.

PLAYING TOGETHER—THE NEW LIFE

Turning now more toward the general social conditions of The New Life, the Master of the Grange suggests the answer to the episode of The Rural Problem:

"There's John Atkins; he does not understand his boy any more than a hen does ducks, and he knows he doesn't. But he says he is going to back him up in anything he undertakes, anyway. They play together, and always have; that is the secret of it. Playing together goes deeper than understanding even. Nothing like play to get people together."

Then as the suppositious noon hour has arrived the Master of the Grange announces that it is time for the picnic lunch in which on Town Fair Day the whole town joins, young and old, or as it was put in the conversation in which the episode originated:

"Have a one-day fair somewhere convenient in the middle of the town; everybody bring the best they've got for comparison.

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and see what we've accomplished during the year. Then at noon have a basket picnic; everyone bring their lunch and have it all together. It ought to come a little while before State Fair."

He also speaks in the episode of the occasional union town service, "with our own ministers, as good as there are anywhere, and they know us a heap better." So also in the episode, true to the future, all the people get together for lunch and sing The Thetford Song:

Come, with a cheer, good neighbors, come!
From every Thetford village!
Leave your troubles! Leave the plough!
Leave the hill-side tillage!
All the town is gathering,
As townsmen, all together,
With purpose one, to stand and sing
In bright or stormy weather!

The Master of the Grange asks the westerner to join them. "More than that, I guess, Charlie," he replies, "I think I had better come home."

Then the people of all the episodes begin to pour in from the two entrances on either side of the grandstand, forming a large semicircle around the nearer grounds and singing:

Hail! The forest days of old!
They who fought and won!
Wary, strong, enduring, bold!
Still they lead us on!

At the same time from the pine woods appears Thetford, coming down to the elm gate. She is beautifully and richly robed in blue and green. On her left arm she carries her Pageant Shield, with the golden rising sun in the upper part and the mountains, the river and the intervale in the lower; in her right hand she carries the Sword of Power. Standing in the elm gate, she raises her sword above her head. In response to her signal come all the Spirits of the Mountains, of the River and of the Intervale. She points to the shorter vista, where Vermont is seen coming, riding

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES

a Morgan horse, clad in green and carrying her State shield and flag. As the people sing:

Hail! Vermont! Green Mountain State!
Bravely hast thou won!
Ride, superb! Despite all fate
Ever leading on!

Vermont rides down to the elm gate and then up around to the top of the hill, where she raises her flag as a signal. Far down the long vista is seen America, on a white horse, clad in the traditional garb of Liberty, all in white, carrying the shield of the United States and the American flag flying in the wind. She is coming at a full gallop, escorted by the states of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut and New York. Instantly as America sweeps down the hill and stops before the assembled pageant, and raises the flag, the orchestra and chorus burst forth in *The Star Spangled Banner*. Then America, with Vermont and the other states ride around and take position on top of the little hill. There Thetford also takes her place at the bridle-rein of America, as the whole pageant from the first settler to the broken family of *The Rural Problem* and to the Boy Scouts and Camp Fire Girls of the future pass in review before them and march away, one massive column, into the distance.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON NATIONAL GAMES*

The Playground and Recreation Association of America, recognizing the need of the general popularizing and national adoption of games that shall better fill the different seasons of the year, occupy children of different talents and temperaments, and at the same time be economical of space, and also of games that can be played indoors and be adopted in the home, requests the various public and private organizations that are carrying on playgrounds to make use during the coming year, so far as feasible, of the following games.

* *Committee.*—Joseph Lee, Boston, Mass., Chairman; J. H. McCurdy, Springfield, Mass.; George W. Ehler, Madison, Wis.; E. B. DeGroot, Chicago, Ill.; George E. Johnson, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Jessie H. Bancroft, New York City; Mary Wood Hinman, Chicago, Ill.; Elizabeth Burchenal, New York City; Myron T. Scudder, New York City.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON GAMES

These games are suggested not in substitution for the existing national games, baseball, football and basketball, or any others that have been found of value already, but in addition to them. We have not included games for very young children, as the list of those is already pretty full and satisfactory.

The Committee would be much obliged for reports, showing at what seasons and for what ages each game is found most successful, with any remarks as to their best form and usefulness.

Most of the games suggested are in the nature of classics which ought not to die out. A few, such as volley ball and soccer, are new or imported games to fill a present gap. The games are arranged approximately in the order of the ages at which they can best be used. Almost all of them are good both for girls and boys.

Cross tag

Puss in the corner. Bancroft, page 163

Three deep. Bancroft, page 196; Chesley, page 32; Angell, page 114

Indian pull. Chesley, page 48; Angell, page 120

Relay races. Arnold, page 50; Chesley, page 47; Bancroft, pages 45, 70, 76, 151, 173, 175, 192, 303, 309, 312-314, 392 and 395

Ring toss and quoits

Hill-dill (on the ice or bare ground)

Prisoners' base (pains being taken to place the prison far enough out to insure only a brief term of incarceration). Bancroft, page 156

Stealing sticks. Bancroft, page 188

"Trees", White men and Indians, Robbers and policemen, or some other running game of sides. Bancroft, page 168

I spy, Run sheep run, etc. Bancroft, page 170

Duck on a rock (safer with "rubber stones"). Bancroft, page 81; Arnold, page 33

Tip cat (either plain or with baseball attachment). Arnold, page 28

Hockey and Shinney (either on ice or on bare ground). See Spalding's Athletic Library

Volley ball or "fist ball." Spalding's Athletic Library, No. 188

Baseball played by kicking a football instead of batting. Otherwise same as baseball

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BADGES

Playground ball or "indoor ball." Spalding's Athletic Library, No. 306, No. 9

Captain ball. Bancroft, page 338; Chesley, page 27; Angell, page 85

Battle ball. Bancroft, page 331. Compare page 334 and Arnold, page 37

Dodge ball. Bancroft, page 363; Chesley, page 29; Angell, page 59

Soccer football. Spalding's Athletic Library, No. 2A.

Also any of the following street or home games that may seem to be dying out in your locality: Tops, marbles, kites, hop scotch—Arnold, page 27, hoop, and jump rope.

And the following indoor games and play:

Dumb crambo (one side selecting a word and the other side acting in pantomime all the rhymes to it until they hit the right one) Bancroft, page 219; Arnold, page 9, charades, dramatics, checkers, parchesi, whittling, gardening, and pets.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BADGES*

The Committee on Athletic Standards for boys has off and on during a period of a number of months endeavored to get together for the purpose of preparing a report that would be worthy the consideration of the association. The conditions, however, under which various members of the committee have had to work during the past year have been such as to almost entirely preclude any real constructive work being done on the subject assigned the committee. However, a number of discussions have been had and the conclusions reached are submitted herein.

A test such as is desired, to be practicable, must be as simple as possible, consisting of events that are suitable for the stage of development of most boys on the playground; must be of such character that they can be performed on practically any playground

* Committee.—George W. Ehler, Madison, Wis., Chairman; J. H. McCurdy, Springfield, Mass.; George W. Fisher, New York City; W. E. Meanwell, Madison, Wis.; William A. Stecher, Philadelphia, Pa.; E. B. DeGroot, Chicago, Ill.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE ON BADGES

where any number of boys congregate; must consist of events in which there is a lively interest, and be of such nature that the measurement of the boys' performance can be accurately determined; must require only such apparatus as is easily secured and be of such nature that the test itself may be conducted in a comparatively small space, in a short period of time, and with a considerable number of boys.

In considering the different events that might be practical under the foregoing conditions the committee reviewed a large variety of activities, including throwing, batting, catching, climbing, vaulting, jumping, running, chinning, and others, and, after considerable discussion and thought, has reached the conclusion that the series of tests originally adopted by the Public Schools Athletic League of New York City and now in quite general use in many public school and playground societies, most nearly fulfills the conditions stated. We would, therefore, recommend as first grade tests—chinning 4 times, broad jump, 5 ft. 9 in., 60 yard dash in 8 3-5 seconds; second grade—chinning 6 times, broad jump 6 ft. 6 in., 60 yard dash in 8 seconds; third grade—chinning 9 times, running high jump of 4 ft. 4 in., 100 yard dash in 14 seconds.

It is suggested that these be not limited as to age or weight; that any boy may enter any test at any time, but shall not be permitted to receive more than one trophy for any grade in any one year.

TROPHIES. It is recommended that a button be adopted, of bronze for the first grade, silver for the second, and gold filled for the third. It is recommended that a prize be offered for a competition between leading sculptors or medal designers for a design for such button; that this competition and the conditions of it be arranged by a committee of two or three of the best artists that can be secured, as a Committee of Award. It is suggested that the design, when adopted, be copyrighted and manufactured in large numbers and sold to organizations throughout the country who will agree to its presentation only to such boys as win it in tests conducted strictly in accordance with conditions prescribed by the Board of Directors.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON CIVIC AND SOCIAL
CENTER DEVELOPMENT, UNIVERSITY OF
WISCONSIN, MADISON, WISCONSIN,
OCTOBER 25-28, 1911

ROWLAND HAYNES,

Field Secretary, Playground and Recreation Association of America

Widespread is the interest in social centers. Last month besides the thousands of students and townspeople who crowded to hear Governor Wilson, Senator Clapp, and other noted speakers, there were scores of men and women, some from Texas, some from California, and many from the Mississippi valley, who came to the meeting at Madison to discuss social and civic centers.

The Social Center Association of America was formed to "promote the development of intelligent public spirit through the community use of the community schoolhouse and other public places for free discussion of public questions and for all wholesome recreational, educational, and civic activities." The purpose of the social center as understood by this organization was further interpreted by the following platform: "The social center represents all the people in all those interests which are common to all. It is the people's forum and permanent headquarters for citizenship and neighborly spirit. In it the people come to know one another and how to make their government work. The public school plant now functions in part. Its present service is parental. The social center makes it also function fraternally. Details of this widened use of the school plant vary with local needs, but its spirit is the Lincoln spirit."

SOCIAL CENTERS IN COUNTRY SCHOOLHOUSES

The importance of the problem of rural life was emphasized and the work of the schoolhouse social center in meeting these problems. Two-thirds of the population of the country still live in smaller places. The schoolhouse social centers in country districts can be the meeting place of neighborly gatherings and of pleasant evening entertainments. They can also be the home of the neighborhood public library and art gallery, and the center for the scattering of information on the prevention of disease,

CIVIC AND SOCIAL CENTER DEVELOPMENT

on better methods of farming and keeping farm accounts, and on labor-saving devices for the farmer's wife.

CITY SOCIAL CENTERS

As far as city social centers are concerned a very interesting line of cleavage was demonstrated. At the conference there were evidently two groups of people, one group interested primarily in the free discussion of public questions, and a second group interested chiefly in the recreational, social and educational features of the so-called social centers.

CIVIC SOCIAL CENTERS

The civic social center is the form in which E. J. Ward, the secretary of the new organization formed at Madison, is particularly interested. He and many others, who have come to think with him, see in the civic social center and the adult civic club therein formed a method of letting people find out the facts about public questions. This letting in of the light they feel is the remedy for many political ills. All will admit that these adult civic clubs offer the possibility of a unique contribution to American life. One can see that they are likely to encounter opposition. Such opposition is no reason for abandoning such adult civic clubs and may be an evidence of their real success in combatting the evils which they seek to remedy. But this inevitable opposition is a reason for making a clear line of distinction between such civic social centers and recreational social centers. In all battles it is attempted by the humane tactics of modern warfare to separate the non-combatants from the fighters. The recreational social center clubs, the groups of young people who meet for gymnastics or dancing, or games, or debates, are non-combatants in the social center life. Their rights should not be endangered by the attacks which are made on the valiant defenders of popular rights in the adult civic clubs. While the adult civic clubs and the recreational and social clubs may both meet in the same school building, it should be made transparently clear that they meet for different purposes and are intended to answer different needs of the community.

CIVIC AND SOCIAL CENTER DEVELOPMENT

RECREATION DIRECTORS

With this line of cleavage was also demonstrated a line of union,—namely, the union between the recreational social center work and outdoor recreation such as is carried on in playgrounds. As Clarence A. Perry, of the Russell Sage Foundation, pointed out very clearly in two talks which he gave at Madison, this line of union comes both from the conditions surrounding those taking part in the two forms of recreation and surrounding those who are to act as supervisors of recreation. The young people who use the parks or playgrounds in summer evenings need wholesome recreation as much in the winter as in the summer. The problems of recreation as such are not fundamentally different whether that recreation is indoors or outdoors. Furthermore the people who supervise playgrounds in summer are generally the ones who will serve best as directors of recreational social centers in the winter. They have the prime qualification of knowing young people and how to work with them. Finally, a city which can offer all-the-year-round work in recreation can usually secure a higher grade of specially trained worker than a community which offers employment for one season only.

During the conference very enjoyable "round table luncheons" were held each noon. These gave opportunities before, during, and after the luncheon to meet groups of people who wished to consider special features of the work and to have the friendly give-and-take conversation in which real conference is secured. Another striking feature was the meeting, at which a hundred or more students were present, where the need and equipment for social center leaders were discussed. It was possible to reach a considerable number of students both men and women who were interested in social questions and in opportunities for social service as their life work. To many this was the most significant meeting of the whole series.

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